CLAIMS:

Claims 1-20 (Withdrawn)

Claims 21-30 (Canceled)

31. (New) A method for identifying a referring source affiliate to an on-line retailer via a computer network, said method comprising the steps of:

A) effecting a first examination of a first request to visit a target site of an on-line retailer, wherein said first request comprises an Internet address, wherein said first request was issued by a user, and wherein said first examination is adapted for determining the presence or absence of a referring source identifier,

B) effecting a determination as to whether said referring source is an affiliate of said online retailer,

C) amending said referring source identifier to said first request to create an amended first request when said first examination determines i) the absence of said identifier and ii) that said referring source is an affiliate of said online retailer; and

D) forwarding said amended first request via said network to said target site.

32) (New) The method of claim 31, wherein said first examination and said determination each occurs before said first request is forwarded via said network.

33) (New) The method of claim 31, wherein said referring source identifier is selected from a plurality of known identification codes when said address is indicative of a retailer to which said referring source is affiliated.

34) (New) The method of claim 31, wherein said first request comprises an Internet address.

35)   (New) The method of claim 31, further comprising the steps of

E)   in response to said amended first request, receiving a reply response from said retailer; and

F)   effecting an examination of said reply response to determine the presence or absence of said referring source identifier.

36)   (New) The method of claim 35, further comprising the step of

G)   re-issuing said request as a second request containing said affiliate identifier when said affiliate identifier is absent from said reply response.

37)   (New) The method of claim 35, wherein said Steps F and G are repeated in response to succeeding reply responses.

38)   (New) The method of claim 35, further comprising the step of

H)   discarding said reply response.

39)   (New) The method of claim 34, further comprising the step of

G)   amending said Internet address to incorporate a second identification code, wherein said second code uniquely identifies said user.

40)   The method of claim 22, wherein said response is passed to a browser or other software for display to a user when said identification code is present in said internet address.

41)   (New) The method of claim 31, wherein said user enters said first request or selects said Internet address by clicking a hyperlink.

42)   (New) The method of claim 31, wherein said Step C includes the step of

C(i), wherein said identification code in said Internet address is included in a manner specified by each retailer.